head, Bunny, if you remember, and not in half such an excellent cause."

Raffles touched all his pockets in his turn, the pockets that contained a small fortune apiece, and he smiled in my face as we crossed the lighted avenues of the Mall. Next moment he was hailing a hansom—for I suppose I was still pretty pale—and not a word would he let me speak until we had alighted as near as was prudent to the flat.

"What a brute I've been, Bunny!" he whispered then. "But you take half the swag, old boy, and right well you've earned it. No, we'll go in by the wrong door and over the roof. It's too late for old Theobald to be still at the play and too early for him to be safely in his cups."

So we climbed the many stairs with catlike stealth and like cats crept out upon the grimy leads. But tonight they were no blacker than their canopy of sky. Not a chimney stack stood out against the starless night. One had to feel one's way in order to avoid tripping over the low parapets of the L shaped wells that ran from roof to basement to light the inner rooms. One of these wells was spanned by a flimsy bridge with iron handrails that felt warm to the touch as Raffles led the

Raffles stopped, his candle held on high, a folding chair under the other arm.

way across. A hotter and a closer night I have never known.

"The flat will be like an oven," I grumbled at the head of our own staircase.

"Then we won't go down," said Raffles promptly. "We'll slack it up here for a bit instead. No, Bunny; you stay where you are. I'll fetch you a drink and a deck chair, and you shan't come down till you feel more fit."

And I let him have his way—I will not say as usual, for I had even less than my normal power of resistance that night. That villainous upper cut! My head still sang and throbbed as I seated myself on one of the aforesaid parapets and buried it in my hot hands. Nor was the night one to dispel a headache. There was distinct thunder in the air. Thus I sat in a heap and brooded over my misadventure, a pretty figure of a subordinate villain, until the step came for which I waited, and it never struck me that it came from the wrong direction.

"You have been quick," said I simply.

"Yes," hissed a voice I recognized, "and you've got to be quicker still! Here, out with your wrists—no, one at a time—and if you utter a syllable you're a dead man!"

It was Lord Ernest Belville. His close cropped iron gray mustache gleamed through the darkness, drawn up over his set teeth. In his hand glittered a pair of handcuffs, and before I knew it one had snapped its jaws about my right wrist.

"Now come this way," said Lord Ernest, showing me a revolver also, "and wait for your friend. And, recollect, a single syllable of warning will be your death!"

With that the ruffian led me to the very bridge I had just crossed at Raffles' heels and handcuffed me to the iron rail midway across the chasm. It no longer felt warm to my touch, but icy as the blood in all my veins.

So this highborn hypocrite had beaten us at our game and his, and Raffles had met his match at last! That was the most intolerable thought—that Raffles should be down in the flat on my account and that I could not warn him of his impending fate, for how was it possible without making such an outcry as should bring the mansions about our ears? And there I shivered on that wretched plank, chained like Andromeda to the rock, with a black infinity above and below. And before my eyes, now grown familiar with the peculiar darkness, stood Lord Ernest Belville, waiting for Raffles to emerge with full hands and unsuspecting heart. Taken so horribly unawares, even Raffles must fall an easy prey to a desperado in resource and courage scarcely second to himself, but one whom he had fatally underrated from the beginning. Not that I paused to think how the thing had happened; my one concern was for what was to happen next.

And what did happen was worse than my worst foreboding, for first a light came flickering into the sort of companion hatch at the head of the stairs, and finally Raffles—in his shirt sleeves! He was not only carrying a candle to put the finishing touch to him as a target; he had dispensed with coat and waistcoat downstairs and was at once full handed and unarmed.

"Where are you, old chap?" he cried softly, himself blinded by the light he carried, and he advanced a couple of steps toward Belville. "This isn't you, is it?"

And Raffles stopped, his candle held on high, a folding chair under the other arm.

"No, I am not your friend," replied Lord Ernest easily, "but kindly remain standing exactly where you are, and don't lower that candle an inch unless you want your brains blown into the street."

Raffles said never a word, but for a moment did as he was bid, and the unshaken flame of the candle was testimony alike to the stillness of the night and to the finest set of nerves in Europe. Then, to my horror, he coolly stooped, placing candle and chair on the leads and his hands in his pockets, as though it were but a popgun that covered him.

"Why didn't you shoot?" he asked insolently as he rose. "Frightened of the noise? I should be, too, with an old pattern machine like that. All very well for service in the field, but on the housetops at dead of night"—

"I shall shoot, however," replied Lord Ernest as quietly in his turn and with less insolence, "and chance the noise unless you instantly restore my property. I am glad you don't dispute the last word," he continued after a slight pause. "There is no keener honor than that which subsists or ought to subsist among thieves, and I need hardly say that I soon spotted you as one of the fraternity—not in the beginning, mind you! For the moment I did think you were one of these smart detectives jumped to life from some sixpenny magazine. But to preserve the illusion you ought to provide yourself with a worthier lieutenant. It was he who gave your show away," chuckled the wretch, dropping for a moment the affected style of speech which seemed intended to enhance our humiliation. "Smart detectives don't go about with little innocents to assist them. You needn't be anxious about him, by the way. It wasn't necessary to pitch him into the street. He is to be seen, though not heard, if you look in the right direction. Nor must you put all the blame upon your friend. It was not he, but you, who made so sure that I had got out by the window. You see, I was in my bathroom all the time, with the door open."

"The bathroom, eh?" Raffles echoed, with professional interest. "And you followed us on foot across the park?"

"Of course."

"And then into a cab?"

"And afterward on foot once more."

"The simplest skeleton would let you in down below."

I saw the lower half of Lord Ernest's face grinning in the light of the candle set between them on the ground.

"You follow every move," said he. "There can be no doubt you are one of the fraternity, and I shouldn't wonder if we had formed our style upon the same model. Ever know A. J. Raffles?"

The abrupt question took my breath away, but Raffles himself did not lose an instant over his answer.

"Intimately," said he.

"That accounts for you, then," laughed Lord Ernest, "as it does for me, though I never had the honor of the master's acquaintance. Nor is it for me to say which is the worthier disciple. Perhaps, however, now that your friend is handcuffed in midair and you yourself are at my mercy, you will concede me some little temporary advantage?"

And his face split in another grin from the cropped mustache downward, as I saw no longer by candlelight, but by a flash of lightning which tore the sky in two before Raffles could reply.

"You have the bulge at present," admitted Raffles, "but you have still to lay hold upon your, or our, ill gotten goods. To shoot me is not necessarily to do so. To bring either one of us to a violent end is only to court a yet more violent and infinitely more disgraceful one for yourself. Family considerations alone should rule that risk out of your game. Now, an hour or two ago, when the exact opposite"—

The remainder of Raffles' speech was drowned from my ears by the belated crash of thunder which the lightning had foretold. So loud, however, was the crash when it came that the storm was evidently approaching us at a high velocity. Yet, as the last echo rumbled away, I heard Raffles talking as though he had never stopped.

"You offered us a share," he was saying. "Unless you mean to murder us both in cold blood it will be worth your while to repeat the offer. We should be dangerous enemies. You had far better make the best of us as friends."

"Lead the way to your flat," said Lord Ernest, with a flourish of his service revolver, "and perhaps we may talk about it. It is for me to make the terms, I imagine, and, in the first place, I am not going to get wet to the skin up here."

The rain was beginning in great drops even as he spoke and by a second flash of lightning I saw Raffles pointing to me.

"But what about my friend?" said he.

And then came the second peal.

"Oh, he's all right," the great brute replied. "Do him good. You don't catch me letting myself in for two to one."

"You will find it equally difficult," rejoined Raffles, "to induce me to leave my friend to the mercy of a night like this. He has not recovered from the blow you struck him in your own rooms. I am not such a fool as to blame you for that, but you are a worse sportsman than I take you for if you think of leaving him where he is. If he stays, however, so do I."

And just as it ceased Raffles' voice seemed distinctly nearer to me, but in the darkness and the rain, which was now as heavy as hail, I could see nothing clearly. The rain had already extinguished the candle. I heard an oath from Belville, a laugh from Raffles, and for a second that was all. Raffles was coming to me, and the other could not even see to fire. That was all I knew in the pitchy interval of invisible rain before the next crash and the next flash.

And then!

This time they came together, and not till my dying hour shall I forget the sight that the lightning lit and the thunder applauded. Raffles was on one of the parapets of the gulf that my footbridge spanned, and in the sudden illumination he stepped across it as one might across a garden path. The width was scarcely greater, but the depth! In the sudden flare I saw to the concrete bottom of the well, and it looked no larger than the hollow of my hand. Raffles was laughing in my ear. He had the iron railing fast—it was between us—but his foothold was as secure as mine. Lord Ernest Belville, on the contrary, was a fifth of a second late for the light and half a foot short in his spring. Something struck our bridge plank so hard as to set it quivering like a harp string. There was half a gasp and half a sob in midair beneath our feet and then a sound far below that I prefer not to describe. I am not sure that I could hit upon the perfect simile. It is more than enough for me that I can hear it still. And with that sickening sound came the loudest clap of thunder yet and a great white glare that showed us our enemy's body far below, with one white hand spread like a starfish, but the head of him mercifully twisted underneath.

"It was his own fault, Bunny. Poor devil! May he and all of us be forgiven. But pull yourself together for your own sake. Well, you can't fall; stay where you are a minute."

I remember the uproar of the elements while Raffles was gone. No other sound mingled with it—not the opening of a single window, not the uplifting of a single voice. Then came Raffles with soap and water, and the gyve was wheedled from one wrist as you withdraw a ring for which the finger has grown too large. Of the rest I only remember shivering till morning in a pitch dark flat whose invalid occupier was for once the nurse and I his patient.

And that is the true ending of the episode in which we two set ourselves to catch one of our own kidney, albeit in another place I have shirked the whole truth. It is not a grateful task to show Raffles as completely at fault as he really was on that occasion, nor do I derive any subtle satisfaction from recounting my own twofold humiliation or from having assisted never so indirectly in the death of a not uncongenial sinner. The truth, however, has, after all, a merit of its own, and the great kinsfolk of poor Lord Ernest have but little to lose by its divulgence. It would seem that they knew more of the real character of the apostle of rational drink than was known at Exeter hall. The tragedy was, indeed, hushed up, as tragedies only are when they occur in such circles. But the rumor that did get abroad as to the class of enterprise which the poor scamp was pursuing when he met his death cannot be too soon exploded, since it breathed upon the fair fame of some of the most respectable flats in Kensington.

Blue Light as a Pain Killer.

Interesting experiments with blue lights as an agent for producing insensibility to pain, the discovery of Professor Renard, have been carried out by Dr. H. Hilliard, anaesthetist to the Royal Dental hospital of London. In an article in the Medical Times and Hospital Dr. Hilliard states that he found that a blue light had on himself a most distinctly calming influence.

"A desire to close the eyes and sleep is experienced," he says, "and after some minutes sensibility to pain is lessened. For instance, the difference between a light pressure made upon the tip of the little finger and a needle could not easily be detected, and surgical needles could be pushed into the face, lips, gums or arm and blood drawn thereby without actual pain being felt unless a still deeper pressure were exerted."

Six Times as Strong as Steam.

A new power, six times as strong as steam, has come into existence, according to J. C. Wood, a Brooklyn inventor and mechanical engineer, who announces his discovery in a technical magazine published in New York city. Coal and a mixture of oil and water constitute the fuel and motive power, and applied experimentally to a truck used in hauling coal in New York it carried 10,000 to 12,000 pounds at an average of six miles an hour at a cost of 80 cents a day.

Automatic Clothes Sprinkler.

A clothes dampener that sprinkles the clothes while they are being ironed comprises a reservoir attachment for a flatiron, with means for regulating the discharge of the water through the spout, or sprinkler, as desired.